

As Karl's parents and guardians we have done everything possible to ensure that he has the best chance at an independent, happy and productive life. Because we are aging and have endured many hardships, we don't feel that we can go on working indefinitely. When we retire after 35 years as CT public school teachers it will be increasingly difficult to pay for Karl's living expenses. Karl has been deemed eligible for residential funding but due to ongoing cuts in the DDS budget, he has been denied this funding and remains on the waiting list.

Last August we were very fortunate to find an apartment very close to Karl's day program at Chapel Haven. We secured community support from the Marrakech agency and applied for and received increased Medicaid funding for Karl's home health aides from Family Care Inc. However, the last 6 months of Karl realizing his dream of living in his own apartment, have been fraught with many challenges. We lost DSS funding and appealed this decision and funding was restored. We have had to fill out countless forms to prove that Karl has autism and is still disabled. Just when we think Karl's life will be more secure, we get another letter from DSS. I would like to quote a portion from a letter we recently received, "The doctors and other trained staff who decided that Karl is still disabled believe that his health may improve. Therefore we will review his case again..." Autism is not a health issue; it is a disorder, which is not likely to improve.

Karl is now making good use of all the education dollars from the public school system, the state and his family by becoming a community member in his beloved Chapel Haven in New Haven. Karl is a fine cellist and singer and has performed at countless events for charities, which have helped many disabled people. He currently belongs to Bethesda Lutheran Church and sings many benefit concerts at the church. Karl will always give back to the community with his God-given musical talents. Karl helps others and the state and federal government should not desert him when he's worked so hard to be a productive member of society. Karl needs DDS residential funding and Medicaid now. This funding will help keep him in his apartment and meet his unique needs as an adult with autism.

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